**Day Treatment Therapy:** Those with the most severe behavior problems attend the day treatment program for 3-6 hours per day, 5 days per week, for 2-16 weeks.

**Parent Training:** Once an effective treatment is developed, we train the parents and other care providers to use it. The long term success of the treatment depends on how accurately the program is carried out by parents, staff, in-home aids, and other care providers. To facilitate accurate use of the treatment, our training for parents and staff involves written and spoken instruction, modeling, behavioral rehearsal or role-play, and systematic feedback.

**TREATMENT EFFICACY**

Over 50 research investigations published in peer-reviewed journals have documented the success of the treatment approach used at the Munroe-Meyer Institute. Destructive behavior is reduced by 80% to 100% in 80% of the children receiving this treatment approach. In almost all cases the treatments we develop are equally effective in the child’s natural environment at the time of discharge.

**REFERRALS AND APPOINTMENTS**

Please fax (402) 559-5004 or email (cawilli1@unmc.edu) referrals including the child’s name, date of birth, reason for referral, and contact information.

Intake specialists are available at (402) 559-8863, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to answer any questions you may have. You may also leave a message and your call will be returned promptly.

**Directions:**
From Saddle Creek Road, take Emile Street OR from Farnam Street, take 44th Street, then Durham Research Plaza, then right.

**Munroe-Meyer Institute**
**Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders**
University of Nebraska Medical Center
985450 Nebraska Medical Center
Omaha, NE 68198-5450
Phone: (402) 559-8863
Toll-free: (800) 656-3937 ext. 9-8863
Fax: (402) 559-5004
Website: www.unmc.edu/mmi
**PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

A major focus of the Severe Behavior Program within the Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders is to provide highly specialized services to children with developmental disabilities who display destructive behaviors (e.g., aggression, self-injury, pica, property destruction). These problems occur in about 10% to 15% of children with autism, developmental disabilities, and traumatic brain injury. Such children displaying severe behavior problems may (a) pose significant health risks to self and others, (b) interrupt learning and development, (c) cause immeasurable stress and hardship to families, and may (d) be at risk for long term institutionalization.

In order to circumvent or minimize the effect of these behaviors, it is the mission of the program to improve the quality of life for children with severe behavior disorders and their families by:

- providing the most advanced and comprehensive treatment services;
- perpetuating the development and refinement of effective treatments through systematic clinical research;
- promoting the widespread dissemination of effective treatment technologies through highly specialized training and consultation.

**POPULATION SERVED**

The program provides services to school-aged children (ages 3-21) who display severe destructive behavior, such as self-injurious behavior (SIB), aggression, or property destruction that poses a significant risk to self, others, or the environment, which cannot be safely managed or effectively treated in a less intensive program.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Our treatment program is modeled after the Neurobehavioral Programs at the Marcus and Kennedy Krieger Institutes at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, which have been in existence for over 20 years. Dr. Fisher developed and directed these world renowned programs before joining the faculty at UNMC and becoming director of the Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders.

The Severe Behavior Program at the Munroe-Meyer Institute offers a continuum of services including evaluation, outpatient services, and a day treatment program. Each child moves through the continuum based on his or her individual needs.

During therapy sessions, highly specialized techniques are used to identify environmental variables that may be contributing to the behavior problem. Trained therapists, as well as the child’s caregivers, conduct analogue sessions to directly test the effects of specific environmental antecedents and consequences on the target behavior. A psychologist with specialty training in applied behavior analysis oversees all therapy sessions. Therapists record each occurrence of targeted child and parent behaviors on laptop computers; and the accuracy of the data is checked daily. Session-by-session data are graphed, reviewed, and analyzed multiple times each day by therapists and supervising psychologists. Data are used to guide assessment and to evaluate and refine the development of treatment. Treatment components are evaluated systematically using single-case designs. Ineffective components are refined or replaced until treatment goals are achieved. Assessments and treatments for each patient receive daily peer review by multiple senior behavior analysts and staff. A specialized therapeutic environment is used to allow safe evaluation of dangerous behaviors (e.g., padded-treatment rooms with one-way windows for observation).

**Initial Evaluation:** The family and child will be seen by a team of specialists with training and expertise in the assessment of severe destructive behavior. Some children require only an evaluation and written recommendations, whereas others require one of the following services:

**Outpatient Therapy:** Children with less severe behaviors will be seen once a week for 1 or 2 hours, whereas children with more severe problems can be seen daily for 2 hours each day.